

Serial No. 10/777,024

IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (previously presented). Mowing apparatus comprising, in combination: first, second, and third mowers; and a tow frame for ganging the mowers, with the tow frame including a towing tongue adapted to be removably connected to a towing vehicle for being towed in a towing direction, with the first and second mowers being pivotably connected to the towing tongue about a front axis, with the front axis being generally perpendicular to the towing direction, with the first mower being pivotably connected to the towing tongue about a first side axis parallel to and spaced from the towing direction and the second mower being pivotably connected to the towing tongue about a second side axis parallel to and spaced from the towing direction and to the first side axis, with the third mower being pivotably connected relative to the first and second mowers about a mid axis, a swivel axis perpendicular to the mid axis, and a pivot axis perpendicular to the mid axis and the swivel axis, with the third mower located intermediate and behind the first and second mowers in the towing direction, with the third mower being selectively physically restrained against pivotable movement about the pivot axis.

Claim 2 (previously presented): Mowing apparatus comprising, in combination: first, second, and third mowers; and a tow frame for ganging the mowers, with the tow frame including a towing tongue adapted to be removably connected to a towing vehicle for being towed in a towing direction, with the first and second mowers being pivotably connected to the towing tongue about a front axis, with the front axis being generally perpendicular to the towing direction, with the first mower being pivotably connected to the towing tongue about a first side axis parallel to and spaced from the towing direction and the second mower being pivotably connected to the towing tongue about a second side axis parallel to and spaced from the towing direction and to the first side axis, with the third mower being pivotably connected relative to the first and second mowers about a mid axis, a swivel axis perpendicular to the mid axis, and a pivot axis perpendicular to the mid axis and the swivel axis, with the third mower located intermediate and behind the first and second mowers in the towing direction, with the tow frame including a mid link having first and second ends, with the first end of the mid link pivotably mounted to the first mower about the first side axis, with the second end of the mid link pivotably mounted to the second mower about the second side axis, with the third mower being pivotably connected to the mid link.

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Claim 3 (original): The mowing apparatus of claim 2 with the third mower further being pivotably connected relative to first and second mowers about a rear axis, with the rear axis being parallel to and spaced from the mid axis.

Claim 4 (original): The mowing apparatus of claim 3 with the tow frame including a rear link, with the third mower being pivotably connected to the rear link about the rear axis, with the mid link pivotably connected to the rear link about the mid, swivel, and pivot axes.

Claim 5 (original): The mowing apparatus of claim 4 with the tow frame including a pivot link including a first collar and a second collar extending perpendicular to the first axis, with the first collar defining the mid axis and the second collar defining the pivot axis.

Claim 6 (original): The mowing apparatus of claim 5 with the tow frame including a swivel having a U-shape including a pair of ears extending from an interconnection and a pin extending through the pair of ears and the second collar and defining the pivot axis, with the rear link including a pin extending through the interconnection and defining the swivel axis.

Claim 7 (original): The mowing apparatus of claim 6 with the mid link including a pair of ears, with the tow frame further including a pin extending through the pair of ears of the mid link and the first collar and defining the mid axis.

Claim 8 (original): The mowing apparatus of claim 7 with the rear link being of a generally U-shape and having first and second legs terminating in collars which are aligned and spaced from each other, with the collars of the rear link defining the rear axis.

Claim 9 (original): The mowing apparatus of claim 8 with the mowers each including a pair of front wheels mounted by mounting brackets, with the tow frame further including first and second pins extending through the mounting brackets and the collars of the rear link and defining the rear axis.

Claim 10 (canceled).

Claim 11 (original): The mower apparatus of claim 4 with the tow frame including a front link, with the front link being pivotally mounted to the towing tongue by the front axis, with the first and second mowers being pivotally connected to the front axis, with the first and second mowers being pivotally connected to the front link by the first and second side axes.

Claim 12 (original): The mower apparatus of claim 11 with the tow frame including first and second side links, with the first link being pivotally mounted to the front link by the first side axis, with the second link being pivotally mounted to the front link by the second side axis.

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Claims 13 and 14 (canceled).

Claim 15 (original): The mower apparatus of claim 6 with the tow frame including means for selectively physically restraining pivotable movement about the pivot axis.

Claim 16 (original): The mower apparatus of claim 2 with the mid link including a carrier adapted to carry common components of the first, second and third mowers.

Claim 17 (original): The mowing apparatus of claim 1 with each of the first, second and third mowers including an indicator for indicating that the mower is operating.

Claim 18 (previously presented): Mowing apparatus comprising, in combination: first, second, and third mowers; a tow frame for ganging the mowers, with the tow frame including a towing tongue adapted to be removably connected to a towing vehicle for being towed in a towing direction, with the first and second mowers being pivotably connected to the towing tongue about a front axis, with the front axis being generally perpendicular to the towing direction, with the first mower being pivotably connected to the towing tongue about a first side axis parallel to and spaced from the towing direction and the second mower being pivotably connected to the towing tongue about a second side axis parallel to and spaced from the towing direction and to the first side axis, with the third mower being pivotably connected relative to the first and second mowers about a mid axis, a swivel axis perpendicular to the mid axis, and a pivot axis perpendicular to the mid axis and the swivel axis, with the third mower located intermediate and behind the first and second mowers in the towing direction; a control box including a control circuit for starting or stopping operation of the first, second and third mowers; and a handheld remote control device actuating the control circuit of the control box.

Claim 19 (original): The mowing apparatus of claim 17 with each of the first, second, and third mowers including internal combustion engines including a starter, with the control circuit including a timer actuating a starter solenoid for actuating for a limited time the starters of the internal combustion engines.

Claim 20 (original): The mowing apparatus of claim 19 with the internal combustion engines further including a choke, with the control circuit including a timer actuating for a limited time a choke actuator actuating the choke, with the control circuit including a temperature sensor for blocking actuation of the choke actuator when the internal combustion engine is warm.

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Claim 21 (original): The mowing apparatus of claim 20 further comprising, in combination: a fuel tank for the internal combustion engines, with the control circuit further including a fuel solenoid valve for controlling fuel flow to the internal combustion engines.

Claims 22 and 23 (canceled).

Claim 24 (previously presented): The mowing apparatus of claim 1 with the first mower being selectively restrained against pivotable movement, and with the second mower being selectively restrained against pivotable movement.

Claim 25 (previously presented): Mowing apparatus comprising, in combination: first, second, and third mowers; a tow frame for ganging the mowers, with the tow frame including a towing tongue adapted to be removably connected to a towing vehicle for being towed in a towing direction, with the first mower being pivotably connected to the towing tongue, with the second mower being pivotably connected to the towing tongue; a mid link located intermediate the first and second mowers with the mid link pivotally connected to the towing tongue, with the third mower being pivotably connected to the mid link about a mid axis, a swivel axis perpendicular to the mid axis, and a pivot axis perpendicular to the mid axis and the swivel axis, with the third mower located intermediate and behind the first and second mowers in the towing direction, with each of the first, second, and third mowers including internal combustion engines; and a fuel tank for each of the first, second and third mowers, with the fuel tank carried by the mid link.

Claim 26 (previously presented): The mowing apparatus of claim 25 with the towing direction being parallel to a lawn to be mowed, with the mid link pivotal relative to the towing tongue about a front axis perpendicular to the towing direction and parallel to the lawn to be mowed.

Claim 27 (previously presented): The mowing apparatus of claim 26 with the mid link having first and second ends, with the first end of the mid link pivotably mounted to the first mower, with the second end of the mid link pivotably mounted to the second mower, with the third mower being pivotably connected to the mid link intermediate the first and second ends, with the first and second mowers being pivotably connected to the towing tongue about the front axis, with the mid link pivotally connected to the towing tongue by virtue of the pivotal mounting to the first and second mowers.

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Claim 28 (previously presented): The mowing apparatus of claim 1 with the pivot axis being defined by a pivot pin extending through a pair of ears of a swivel and through a collar, with the third mower being selectively physically restrained by a locking rod inserted through the pair of ears and the collar spaced from the pivot pin.

Claim 29 (previously presented): The mowing apparatus of claim 1 with the pivot axis extending through first and second components, with the third mower being selectively physically restrained by a fork rotatably mounted to the first component between a restrained position and a release position, with the fork receiving the second component in the restrained position and being free of the second component in the release position.

Claim 30 (new): The mowing apparatus of claim 1 further comprising, in combination: a mid link located intermediate the first and second mowers with the mid link pivotally connected to the towing tongue, with the third mower being pivotably connected to the mid link about the mid axis, the swivel axis, and the pivot axis, with each of the first, second, and third mowers including internal combustion engines; and a fuel tank for each of the first, second and third mowers, with the fuel tank carried by the mid link.

Claim 31 (new): The mowing apparatus of claim 1 further comprising, in combination: a control box including a control circuit for starting or stopping operation of the first, second and third mowers; and a handheld remote control device actuating the control circuit of the control box.

Claim 32 (new): The mowing apparatus of claim 1 with the tow frame including a mid link having first and second ends, with the first end of the mid link pivotably mounted to the first mower about the first side axis, with the second end of the mid link pivotably mounted to the second mower about the second side axis, with the third mower being pivotably connected to the mid link.